

Assignment TV

By **TERRENCE O'FLAHERTY**

The year-end financial figures for the Nation's three commercial networks were recited with the solemnity of the Scriptures at recent high-echelon board meetings in several of New York's more hallowed bank vaults with background music provided by the 1,100 member chorale of the A. C. Nielsen Audience Rating Co.

These are TV's REAL award ceremonies. Once again, NBC and CBS are on top with NBC having the sales and audience lead over its competitor for the first time in 12 years. NBC credit its specials, its color leadership, its faith in old movies, and the two biggest hits of the past two seasons: "Rowan and Martin's Laugh-In" and "Julia." Meanwhile CBS is switching around some vice presidents in a frantic effort to regain its lost prestige with the head writer at the Stock Exchange Club.

YET, IN any roundup of TV in recent years, based on imagination and audacity, ABC is superior to the other nets and it is painful to me to think that it might be hanging its head around Wall Street these days because adventurous ideas don't always pay off at the bank.

Last fall ABC introduced the only new program ideas of the season (with the possible exception of NBC's "Julia," a routine situation comedy of a different color). They were "Journey to the Unknown," "Land of Giants," "Mod Squad," and "That's Life." They weren't always successful but they were original. Three seasons back, "ABC Stage 67" was considered unprofitable by cashiers but it was a dramatic ground breaker. On the other hand ABC was first to gamble heavily on a major American writer — and won — with Truman Capote's "Christmas Memory" and "Thanksgiving Visitor."

ABC's news shows often seem to have a fresher look and newer angle. Lacking super-stars like Huntley, Brinkley, and Cronkite, it has taken chances on newer and younger ones. Instead of trying to compete with the other nets' gigantic and mostly convention coverage, ABC turned loose articulate observers from opposite political polls and their exchanges were often the liveliest on the air.

ABC HAS been the most adventurous in the area of thoughtful programming and an excellent example was a single evening last week when they presented the latest report from "The Undersea World of Jacques Cousteau" which has been the most exciting new TV venture in a decade and replaced Hollywood's ersatz adventurers with the living variety.

They followed this with "To Love a Child" which documents the frustrations and the joys of adopting a baby seen through the eyes of a New York couple

narrated by Maureen Stapleton. And later in the evening a program tracing the career of Jean-Calude Killy the international ski idol in "Killy Le Champion," filmed on the slopes of his boyhood home in the French Alps. "Cosmopolis" followed, an ABC News documentary on the work and dreams of architects and urban planners of the growing cities of the world, the second installment of "Man and His Universe" produced by John Secordari who was responsible for another distinguished ABC series, "The Saga of Western Man" . . .

I guess what I'm really trying to say to the boys at ABC is this: don't be discouraged. But the next time you and all the network guys get together to measure each other for the year, just use another yardstick — the one marked IMAGINATION—and you'll win.

South High Coed Wins Citation

Linda G. Polin, a senior at South High School, has been cited as one of the outstanding high school students of English in the country. The National Council of Teachers of English has named her a 1968 national runner-up in its annual Achievement Awards competition.

Last spring, Miss Polin competed with four other South High students for nomination to the NCTE citation. Competition included a one-hour essay examination, a one-hour test on knowledge of the English language, and consideration of original manuscripts of the student.

The NCTE sends to all winners and runners-up scrolls of recognition and it honors their high school English department with certificates of merit. Runners-up receive no scholarship awards, but colleges and universities are notified of the very prestigious accomplishment.

Miss Polin is the daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Albert Polin of 409 Via la Soledad.

Tour Guides Sought by Botanic Gardens Staff

Applications are being accepted by the County of Los Angeles Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens for the position of as needed tour guide at its facility on Rolling Hills Road. The position is open to men only.

The work schedule for guides in the "as needed" category calls for weekend and holiday work up to a maximum of 115 days per year. The pay scale is \$2.89 per hour or \$23.12 per day. An as needed tour guide at South Coast Botanic Garden may expect to work the full 115 days.

Typical guides with the department are students and teachers with a professional or general interest in botany or horticulture. An important factor in rating applicants for the job is the indication of an ability to express oneself clearly and to deal with the public in a courteous and responsible way.

INSURANCE DIVIDENDS

More than 4 million World War I and II veterans will receive \$236 million in dividends on their GI insurance policies during 1969.

Bank Rated 24th in New Loan Report

Imperial Bank has moved from 63rd to 24th in the Realty Financing Report published by the Realty Tax and Service Co. of Los Angeles.

The report covers mortgages and trust deeds affecting real estate in Los Angeles County. Imperial jumped from \$1,092,129 in May to \$2,527,070 in the recently issued October Report.

Imperial Bank is headquartered at Imperial and Western in Los Angeles and has offices in Torrance and Westchester.

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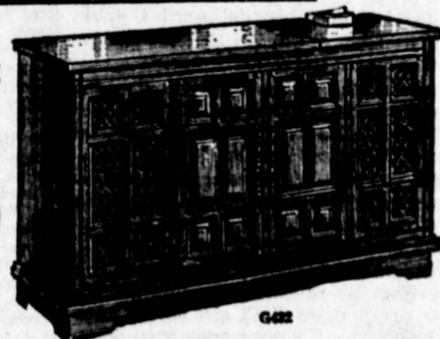
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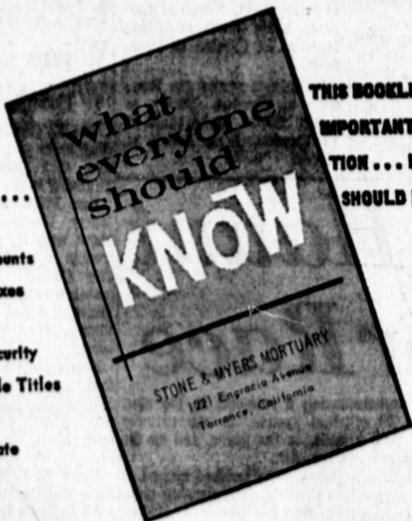
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